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## EDITOR'S MISCELLANY



PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS AT BIRTH.—This leaflet is issued by the Massachusetts Association for Promoting the Interests of the Adult Blind, which owes thanks for information and material to Henry J. Wilson, secretary of Gardner's Trust for the Blind, London; Professor Dr. Fuchs, Vienna; Professor Dr. Axenfeld, Freiburg, Baden, and Dr. John A. Tenney, Boston:

The inflammation of the eyes of new-born infants is a contagious disease, which can only be cured if taken in time and treated with proper care under a doctor's direction. Many thousands of children have lost their sight from this cause, and it has been found in England that thirty per cent. of the pupils in schools for the blind were blinded by neglect or wrong treatment of this disease.

The following directions for treatment are most important:

1. Immediately after the birth of a baby, before doing anything else, wipe the eyelids and all around the eyes with a clean, soft, *dry* linen rag, and soon after wash these parts with warm water.

2. Do not expose the baby to cold air, as cold is one cause of this eye disease.

The disease can be easily known by redness, swelling, and heat of the eyelids, and by the discharge of yellowish matter from the eye. *Immediately send for a doctor*, and keep the eyes as clean as possible by gently washing away the matter every fifteen minutes, both by day and night. *It is the discharge of pus that does the mischief.*

The washing is done thus:

1. Hold the eyelids apart with finger and thumb, and let a gentle stream of warm water run between them from a bit of fresh rag or cotton wool held a little above.

2. Then move the eyelids softly up and down and sidewise to bring out the pus from inside, and wash it off gently.

3. *The saving of the sight depends on the greatest care and cleanliness.*

Each rag must be used only once and then burned immediately; a separate rag must be used for each eye.

4. A little vaseline or lanoline should be occasionally smeared along the lids to keep them from sticking.

5. If only one eye is diseased, the child must be laid on the side of that eye, so that the pus may not flow over the nose into the other eye.

Since the pus is highly contagious, the nurse must carefully wash her own hands after touching the diseased eyes.

The poison of the pus is far more dangerous in the eye of the adult than in the eye of the infant.

*Caution.*—Do not use any lotions or poultices without the advice of a doctor.